Proper Tree Pruning

Why, When and How Much to Prune?



Why Prune?

For future health - Prune a tree to establish good branch structure and spacing, and one central trunk.



For safety - Pruning assures that the vision or sight lines of motorists, bikers or pedestrians are not compromised. Prune limbs to reduce conflicts with traffic signs, utilities or to prevent potential hazards.



maintained tree looks good and adds value to your oroperty.

When to Prune?

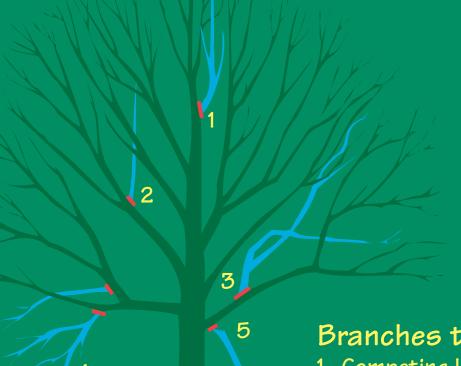
Prune when the tree is dormant, typically November through March in Wisconsin. The worst time to prune a tree is in the spring when tree buds and leaves are growing.

How Much to Prune?

Avoid removing more than 25% of the live branches from a tree, no matter what the tree's age, size or species.



- ✔ Before pruning take a step back and look at your tree.
- ✓ Envision your tree after it's pruned. Remember you can always take more off, but can't put it back on.
- ✓ Always have a purpose in mind before a cut is made.



Branches to Prune

- 1. Competing leader
- 2. Vertical
- 3. Crossing
- 4. Downward growing
- 5. Broken or dead
- 6. Suckers

What Not to Do...



Avoid leaving too much or too little of the pruned branch.

Stub Cut -(leaving too much)

Finish cuts should never leave a stub that a cap can hang from.

Flush Cut -(leaving too little)

A flush cut opens the tree to decay and prevents proper and complete wound closure. Compare the results of a flush cut (left) and proper cut (right).



make the mistake of cutting off the top of a tree's canopy to reduce its size. Besides being unattractive, topping leads to weak growth and decay.

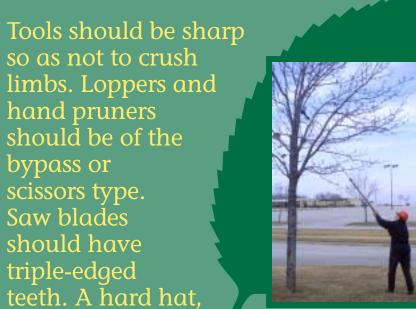




How to Prune



- 1) Pole saw & lopper head
- 2) Hand saws
- 3) Helmet & safety glasses
- 4) Hand pruner
- 5) Leather gloves
- 6) Long-handled lopper



leather gloves and Before using a eye protection are pole saw, always check for overhead utilities.

Branch 2

Branch

Collar

3 – Step Cut

recommended.

Tools to Use

Avoid tearing bark by using these three sequential cuts when pruning a limb you cannot support with one hand, while cutting with the other. Torn bark often leads to decay.



At least 12 - 18" from the final cut, make an undercut

approximately 1/3 of the way through the branch.



Outside the first cut, sawing from the top down, completely remove the branch.



Step 3

Begin the final cut outside of the branch bark ridge, continuing at a slightly outward angle, finishing the cut just outside the branch collar. It is not necessary nor recommended to paint the wound.



